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26 March 1965

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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CONTENTS

25X1

25X1

4. Morocco: Recent rioting may mark beginning of protracted period of political agitation. (Page 6)
5. Note: Bolivia. (Page 7)

25X1

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Next 8 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Morocco: The disturbances this week in major Moroccan cities may mark the beginning of a protracted period of political agitation.

The riot in Casablanca on 23 March was the most serious which has occurred in Morocco since it gained independence in 1956. The riot broke out when some opposition elements exploited student demonstrations to express their dissatisfaction with widespread unemployment and inflation. About a dozen persons were killed, several score injured, and some 170 persons arrested. Sympathy demonstrations followed in Rabat and Fez.

Moroccan security forces have moved quickly to restore order. Press censorship has been imposed, and hundreds of additional troops have been deployed in Casablanca. The police are reported to be rounding up some left-wing labor leaders¹ and most known Communists are said to have been taken into custody.² Iraqi and possibly Syrian teachers have been arrested.

The riots are likely to deflect King Hassan from his efforts to persuade the opposition to participate in a government of national union, for he probably will not wish to appear to be acting under pressure. He nevertheless is trying to reorganize his government, and is looking for a replacement for the inept Premier Bahnini. [redacted]

25X1

25X1

26 Mar 65

6

25X1

25X1

NOTES

*Bolivia: National elections scheduled for 26 September will be postponed indefinitely, [redacted]

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[redacted] rumors to this effect are circulating in La Paz. A postponement ~~will~~ in fact remove the pressure on junta chief Barrientos to resign if he wishes to remain a presidential candidate. [The military junta reportedly believes announcement of the cancellation will precipitate angry demonstrations by the powerful rightist Bolivian Socialist Falange]

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26 Mar 65

7

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